

VZCZCXRO8775  
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DE RUEHAK #0616/01 0780927  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 190927Z MAR 07  
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1365  
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEBAAA/DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2347  
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA PRIORITY 1757

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DOE FOR CHUCK WASHINGTON AND LANA EKIMOFF

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SUBJECT: MFA PREVIEWS TURKEY'S RESPONSE TO EPC ACTION PLAN

11. (SBU) Summary: In a March 14 meeting with Ambassador, Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Ertegrul Apakan previewed Turkey's reaction to our draft of the Economic Partnership Commission (EPC) Action Plan. Stressing that MFA staff needed a week or two to get interagency clearance, Apakan said he was in general very pleased both by the EPC meetings and the concrete way the Action Plan has developed. He believes that it stands with the "Strategic Vision Document" as a tangible demonstration of our joint commitment to the relationship and hopes that the document can be made public. Following are some of the specific comments mentioned by Apakan, which he said were preliminary and offered in the spirit of refining what is already an excellent document. Ambassador said we shared the positive assessment of the paper and the prospects for deeper economic cooperation, noting that some of the action items -- such as last weekend's Iraq gas meeting -- were already being accomplished. End Summary.

#### Science and Technology Cooperation

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12. (SBU) Apakan said renewing the S and T cooperation agreement is a priority for the MFA. The draft provided by the State Department is currently being reviewed by other Turkish agencies. In addition, Apakan suggested that a yearly U.S.-Turkey University Conference could be incorporated as part of the S&T section of the Action Plan. Ambassador noted that the Turkish American Scientists and Scholars Association already did this, perhaps providing a base on which to build. Apakan agreed, saying it was unfortunate that State Minister Babacan was not able to participate in the upcoming TASSA conference when he is in the United States later this month because of scheduling reasons.

#### Container Security Initiative

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13. (SBU) Apakan mentioned that Turkish interagency discussions related to the CSI agreement were occurring in Ankara. Following the meeting with Apakan, we separately suggested to Director General for the Americas Vefahan Ocak that travel by Turkish officials to the TIFA Council meetings next month presents an opportunity to discuss the agreement with Homeland Security and State Department officers and counsel, and hopefully to finalize it.

#### Joint Production Opportunities

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¶4. (SBU) Apakan felt that this language could be more "forthcoming" and said that the Turkish side would provide specific suggestions on how to go beyond the current reference to "exploration" of opportunities. He argued that it was important to have specific wording "since this idea replaces QIZs." Apakan suggested moving the JPO language to the business subheading, but also said that MFA would propose additional descriptive language to enhance the regional cooperation topic.

¶5. (SBU) Apakan suggested finding a way to highlight the proposed cooperation between the Small Business Administration and Turkey's KOSGEB. (Post will ask MFA to arrange a meeting with KOSGEB to get a better understanding of the issues raised during the EPC meeting.)

Energy  
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¶6. (SBU) Apakan stressed the importance of this topic and the opportunities for cooperation. Ambassador mentioned the recent meeting on Iraqi Natural Gas and the trip to Henry Hub, which has been proposed for April 14. Apakan and Ocak felt that the language regarding a transit agreement should also find some way to call upon European countries to support such gas transit. Ambassador noted that we had to be careful about how this would be worded, but looked forward to hearing the Turkish suggestions.

¶7. (SBU) Apakan noted the reference to cooperation on "Clean Coal" technology, saying that this would be an especially useful area to emphasize.

Final Document Should Be Public

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¶8. (SBU) Finally, Apakan reiterated his satisfaction with this work and its contribution to the relationship, suggesting that the final document be made public. Post would support this idea, but would appreciate Washington's guidance.  
WILSON